



ARBORICULTURAL SURVEY

**ARGUILE PLACE
HINCKLEY
LEICESTERSHIRE
LE10 0GH**

**Prepared for
Midland Property Management Ltd
Whitehouse Court
New Road
Featherstone
Nr Wolverhampton
Staffordshire
WV10 7NW**

**Prepared by
M J Boddy *F Arbor A, FICFor, CEnv***

7th October 2024

Symbiosis
consulting

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1** My name is Michael Boddy; I am a Registered Consultant of the Arboricultural Association, a Chartered Arboriculturist and director of Symbiosis Consulting. I am instructed by Midland Property Management, to undertake a review of the condition of ten wellingtonias (*Sequoiadendron giganteum*) growing within the grounds of Arguile Place in Hinckley. This follows an initial inspection of the trees I carried out in July 2022, which was commissioned due to particular concerns over two of the trees (T5 & T6) which had been observed to be declining.
- 1.2** This report is based upon data collected during a ground level inspection of the subject trees undertaken on Monday 26th July 2022, when the weather was dry but somewhat overcast. Whilst on the property I observed issues with three further trees and have included observations and recommendations on these within the report.

2.0 STATUTORY RESTRICTIONS

- 2.1** The subject trees are protected by the Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council (Hinckley (The Valley Lodge, Hollycroft) Tree Preservation Order (No.1), which was made in 1989. This is an area order which predates the redevelopment of the site and covers all of the trees that were growing within the grounds to the front of Valley Lodge when it was made. Accordingly, with the exception of the removal of dead wood, it will be necessary to obtain the written consent of the Borough Council prior to any works being undertaken to these.

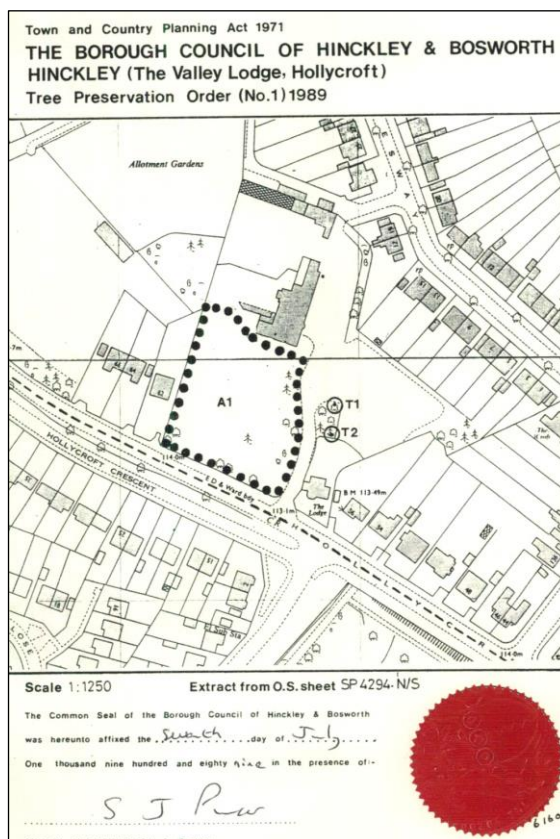


Figure 1: Copy of the tree preservation order plan

3.0 SITE PLAN

- 3.1** I have updated the plan prepared for the 2002 report, which shows the approximate stem positions and survey numbers of the wellingtonias, to add the stem plots and reference letters of the three additional trees included in the report. A copy of the annotated extract of the plan is included at Appendix 1.

4.0 GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

- 4.1** Arguile Close is a modern residential development on the site of the former Manor public house, on the northern side of Hollycroft, and lies just outside the Hollycroft Conservation Area.
- 4.2** The wellingtonias are growing within a slightly elevated landscaped bed running parallel with the left side of the entrance drive to the development, with a pedestrian path running along the western edge. They are between 23 and 25 metres tall, with stem diameters, measured at 1.5 metres, ranging from 840 to 1250 millimetres. Whilst dominated by the wellingtonias, the bed contains several further trees, including a walnut, a false acacia, purple-leaved sycamores, yews and hollies. There is little ground vegetation, but a deep layer of needle/leaf litter throughout the majority of the bed. The upper horizon of soil is very sandy.
- 4.3** There has been little overall change in the condition of the wellingtonias since I last inspected them in 2022 and it did not appear that any work had been undertaken on them in the intervening period. Whilst there are dead branches in all of the trees, the majority of these are of small diameter and do not currently warrant the cost of having them removed.
- 4.4** Updated observations on the wellingtonias found to be in need of attention, along with the three additional trees that were found to have issues requiring action are detailed below.

5.0 SPECIFIC OBSERVATIONS

5.1 Wellingtonia T5

- 5.1.1** The crown dieback affecting this tree and the neighbouring T6 was the issue of greatest concern arising from my 2022 inspection. T5 is situated close to the western edge of drive. It is a tall specimen with a relatively slender and high crown that had died back significantly prior to my inspection in 2022.
- 5.1.2** Whilst the change in the tree's condition has not been dramatic, its decline has continued and it is supporting less needle cover than in 2022. In view of this, there appears to be little prospect of wellingtonia recovering and my recommendation is that it now be removed along with the stump.

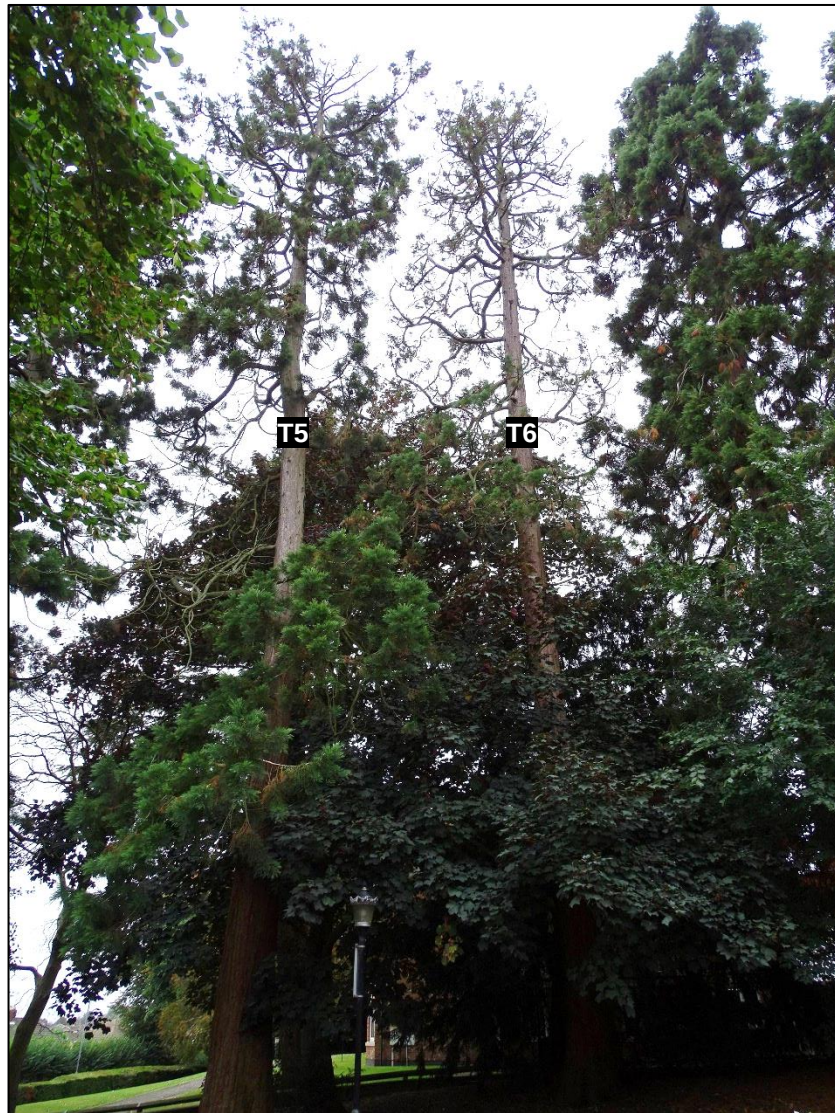
5.2 Wellingtonia T6

5.2.1 Situated to the north of T5, this is a similar sized tree set slightly further back from the western edge of the drive. Of the pair, this tree had died back more extensively prior to my inspection in 2022. As with T5, its condition has deteriorated and it now has insufficient needle cover to sustain it in the long-term, and there is no realistic prospect of it recovering. Accordingly, I recommend that this tree is also removed along with the stump. A single replacement wellingtonia should be planted between the current positions of T5 & T6

5.2.2 Following the issuing of my previous report, the Borough Council's Tree Officer inspected this tree and concluded that it should be felled. With regards to T5, he suggested that it *'may last a bit longer with dead wood removal'* but given its further decline this is no longer a realistic option. There was still no readily apparent reason for the trees' decline.



Photograph 1: T5 & T6 viewed from the north-east



Photograph 2: T5 & T6 viewed from the east

5.3 Wellingtonia T7

- 5.3.1** At around 25 metres in height, this is one of the tallest of the wellingtonias. Set around 4.5 metres in from the western path, the tree is in good overall condition although there is a paucity of branching on the northern side due to the competing influence of T8 and the trunk bifurcates at around 25 metres where it historically lost its leading shoot.
- 5.3.2** As previously observed, a low branch in the southern side of the crown has fractured and is arching down into the crown of the adjacent yew. Whilst this remains relatively stable and is not a safety issue, the branch would be better removed.

5.4 Wellingtonia T8

5.4.1 This tree is situated approximately 4 metres in from the western path and is slightly inclined to the north-east. A heavy upswept branch arises on the western side at 5 metres but otherwise there is an absence of low branching.

5.4.2 As previously reported, a twin-stemmed purple-leaved sycamore is growing a metre to the north, drawn up between this tree and T9. The sycamore is in the early stages of maturity, with the potential for considerable further growth and, whilst not essential, I suggest that it be removed as this would benefit both adjacent wellingtonias.

5.5 Wellingtonia T10

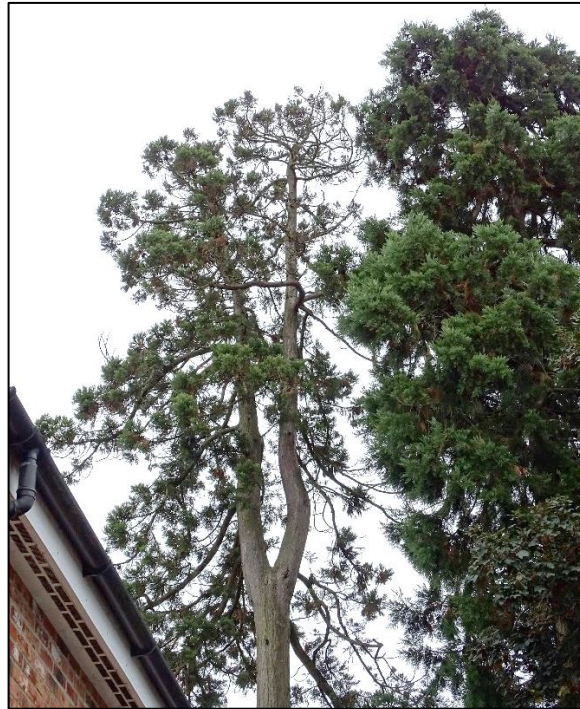
5.5.1 Growing close to the northern end of the bed, this tree is inclined slightly to the north, with a paucity of branching on the southern side due to the competing influence of T9. The trunk bifurcates at around 12 metres but the fork appeared to be reasonably optimised and not especially predisposed to failure. In my previous report, I observed that although less densely foliated than the adjacent T9, this was likely to have been a consequence of its greater exposure rather than indicative of ill-health or decline and did not recommend any remedial pruning.

5.5.2 In the intervening period, there has been a further decrease in needle density in the southern section of the upper crown, but this is relatively localised rather than an overall decline. Given the extent of the dieback, consideration could now be given to the removal of the significant dead branches from the upper section of the crown. However, as the majority of these are in the southern side, over the bed rather than the drive, this is not currently critical.



Photograph 3: T10 viewed from the south-east

Photograph 4: Upper crown of T10 viewed from the west, showing the reduced needle density in the southern (right) side



5.6 Walnut A

- 5.6.1** This is an immature specimen situated on the western edge of the bed containing the wellingtonias, which has died since my previous inspection and requires removal prior to its crown beginning to break up.



Photograph 5: Dead walnut viewed from the north-west

5.7 Deodar cedar B

- 5.7.1** The cedar is in the early stages of maturity and situated to the front of number 5 Arguile Place. There is a fractured branch in the southern side of the mid-crown. Although this is supported by a branch below and appeared to be relatively stable, given the proximity of the tree to the adjacent house and path, the damaged section of the branch would be better removed.



Photograph 6: fractured branch in the crown of Deodar cedar B

5.7 Coper beech C

- 5.7.1** This is a substantial and prominent mature trees situated to the front of number 1 Arguile Place. Its crown is supported on two principal upright stems arising from a tight fork at 2.5m. A braided polypropylene hollow rope ('Cobra') brace has been installed between the two stems at a high level to support the weak fork.
- 5.7.2** Whilst the copper beech was not included in the instruction, I noticed a cluster of fungal fruiting bodies at the base of its trunk that warranted further investigation. The fruiting bodies, which were around the north-eastern side of the base of the tree, were of the Giant polypore fungus (*Meripilus giganteus*). This fungus, which is most commonly found on beech, decays the main structural roots of affected trees, particularly on the underside. It is one of the most serious root rotting fungi on beech and can render colonised trees susceptible to windthrow, sometimes before there are any signs of decline evident in the crown. Other than when the colonisation is at an advanced stage, it is typically difficult to accurately assess the development of the decay associated with the fungus as the deeper roots may be extensively degraded and susceptible to brittle fracture, whilst the upper, younger roots remain unaffected.



Photograph 7: Copper beech C viewed from the east



Photograph 8: Giant polypore fruiting bodies at the base of copper beech C



Photograph 9: Dead bark removed from a colonised buttress exposing the fungal mycelium beneath

5.7.3 Given its proximity to both the adjacent house and the road, I recommend that further investigations be undertaken utilising an air spade operated by a specialist contractor to expose the underside of the buttress roots to assess the extent of decay associated with the fungal colonisation and its likely impact on the immediate and longer term stability of the tree. This information can then be used to inform the future management of the tree.



Photograph 10: Example of an air spade investigation being undertaken on a beech tree colonised by the Giant polypore and a further fungus

6.0 SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 The recommendations arising from the review are summarised in the table below. To aid with planning and budgeting, the recommended works have been allocated a priority categorisation of 1 or 2 to provide an indication as to the level of urgency associated with their implementation. I suggest that the priority 1 works should be undertaken within 3 to 6 months and the priority 2 works within approximately 12 months, subject to obtaining the Borough Council's consent under the tree preservation order where necessary. (The removal of dead wood does not require consent and the dead walnut can be felled following a minimum of five days written notice being given to the Council).

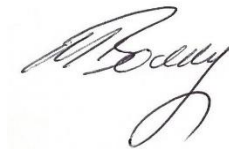
Tree ID	Species	Recommended Works	Priority
T5	Wellingtonia	Fell to ground level and grind the stump	1
T6	Wellingtonia	Fell to ground level and grind the stump Plant a single replacement wellingtonia between current positions of T5 & T6	1
T7	Wellingtonia	Remove fractured branch from the southern side of the crown	2
T8	Wellingtonia	Remove the competing twin-stemmed purple-leaved sycamore growing immediately to the north	2
T10	Wellingtonia	Remove the dead wood of 25mm dia. and above from the upper crown	2
A	Walnut	Fell to ground level and grind the stump	1
B	Deodar cedar	Remove the damaged section of the fractured branch from the southern side of the mid-crown	1
C	Copper beech	Undertaken an air spade investigation to determine the extent of the decay associated with the fungal colonisation of the roots	1

7.0 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RECOMMENDED WORKS

7.1 The recommended works should be undertaken by a suitably qualified and experienced contractor operating in accordance with British Standard BS3998:2010 Tree work - Recommendations.

8.0 FUTURE INSPECTIONS

- 8.1** Given the size of the trees and their proximity to the surrounding buildings and the entrance drive, I recommend that they be professionally inspected on a biennial basis.
- 8.2** Although the wellingtonia is renowned as being one of the most windfirm species growing in the UK, their branches are brittle and naturally predisposed to fracturing/shedding during storm force winds or in association with heavy accumulations of snow. Residents should therefore be alert to the possibility of broken branches being suspended in the trees' crowns following extreme weather events and arrange for them to be checked by a tree surgeon if they have concerns over their safety.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M Boddy".

M J Boddy F Arbor A FICFor CEnv



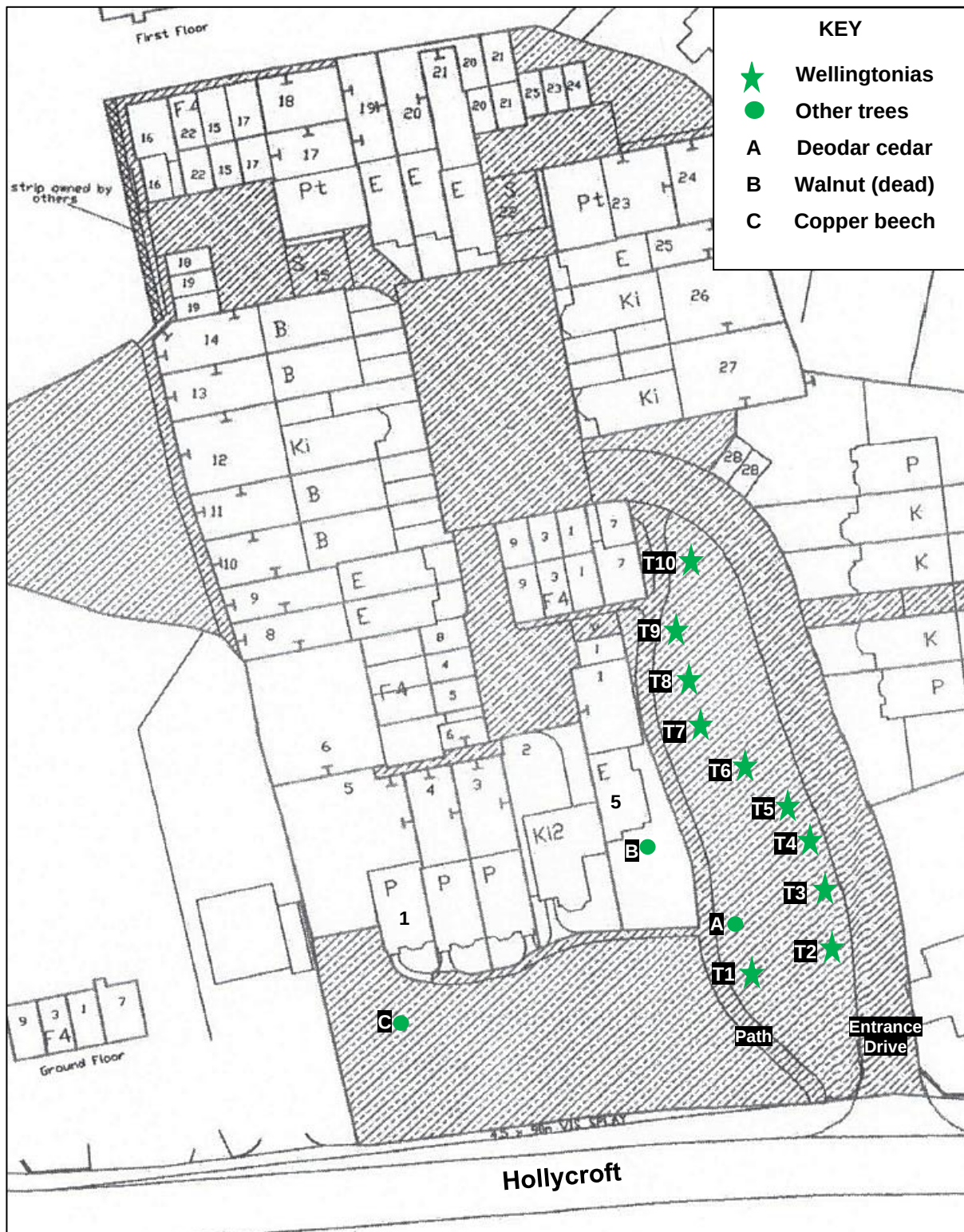
APPENDIX 1

ARGUILE PLACE HINCKLEY

ARBORICULTURAL SURVEY INDICATIVE TREE LOCATION PLAN

ARBORICULTURAL SURVEY: ARGUILE PLACE, HINCKLEY

INDICATIVE TREE LOCATION PLAN





Shiresdale, Mill Houses, Tatham, Lancaster LA2 8NF

Tel: 0330 088 8565

Email: info@symbiosisconsultinguk.com

www.symbiosisconsultinguk.com



Principal Consultant: M J Boddy, F.ArborA FICFor CEnv
Symbiosis Consulting Ltd Registered in England Company no: 3919768